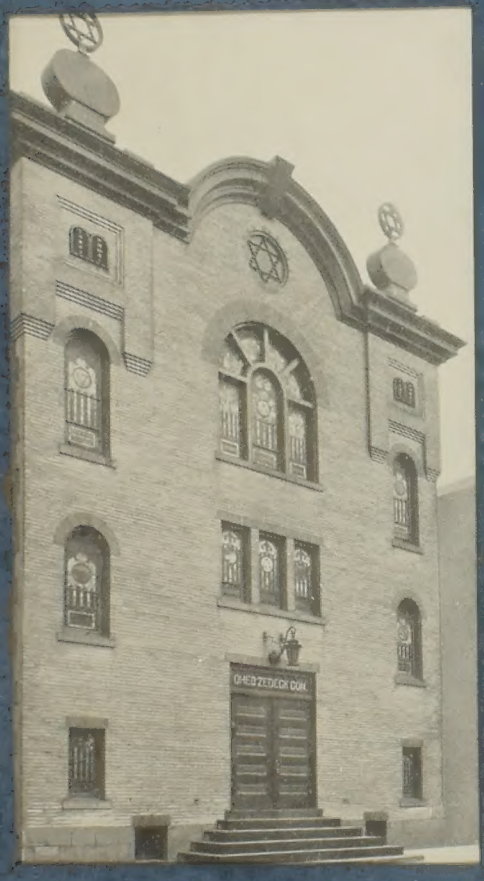
SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

OHEB ZEDECK CONGREGATION

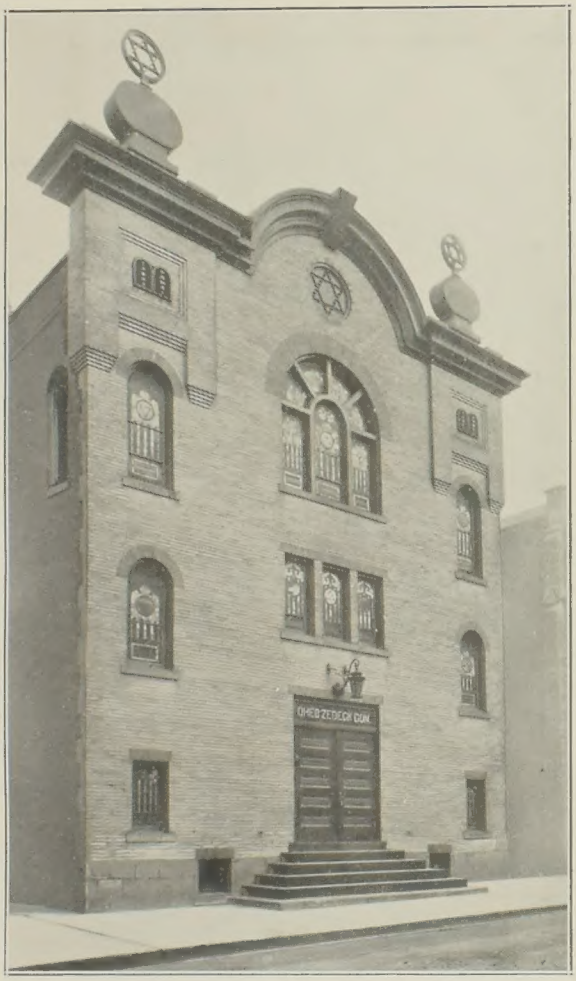
POTTSVILLE, PENNA.



Seventieth Anniversary

OHEB ZEDECK CONGREGATION

5687 1926



Oheb Zedeck Synagogue

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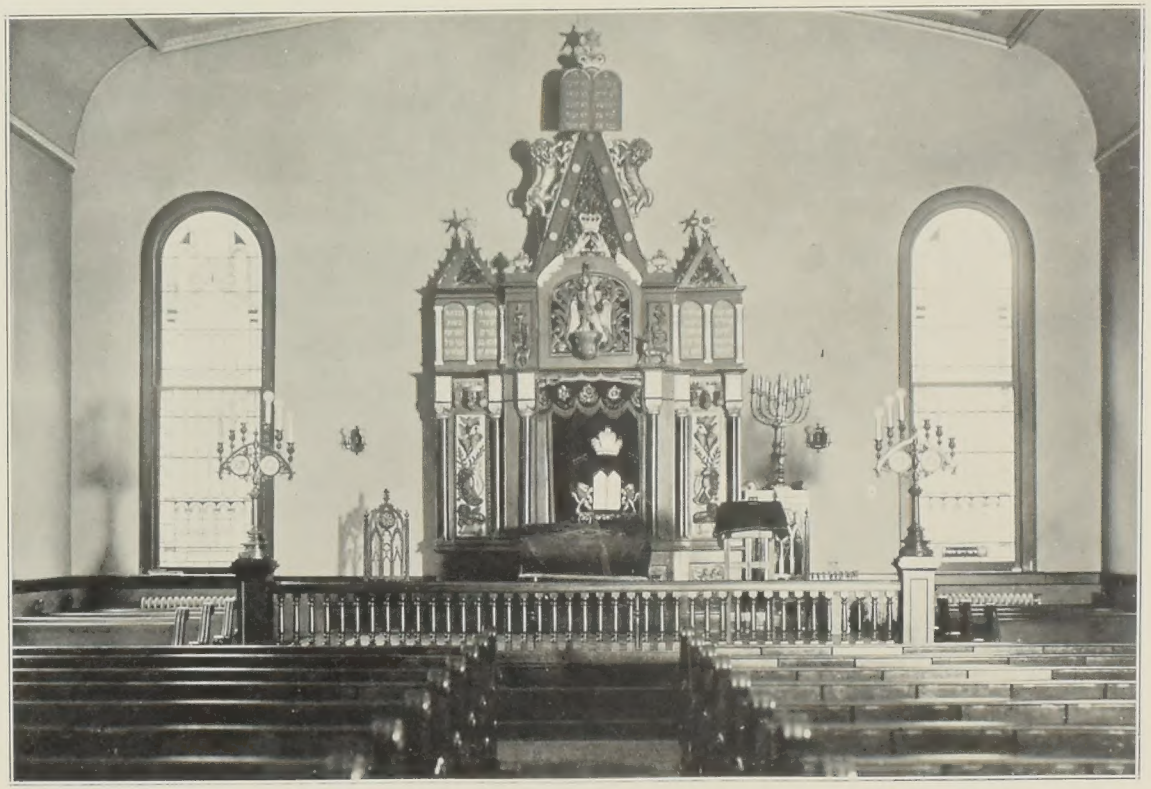

Interior Oheb Zedeck Synagogue

Commemorative

of the

Seventieth Anniversary

of the Founding of

Oheb Zedeck Congregation

in Pottsville, Pa.

1856 :: 1926

November 22-28, 1926

Seventieth Anniversary General Committee

RABBI HERMAN J. BECK,
Honorary Chairman

L. HOLSTEIN,
Chairman

M. HANIN,
Treasurer

N. ANTOKOLITZ,
Secretary

Printing Committee

Mr. S. S. Seaman, Chairman
Mrs. S. Seaman
Mrs. A. Weiner
Rabbi H. J. Beck

Inter-Synagogue Committee

Mr. J. Rosenzweig, Chairman
Mr. N. Lefkowitz
Mr. S. March
Mrs. H. Cooper
Mrs. N. Rouse
Mrs. I. Dropkin
Mrs J. Rosenzweig
Mrs. A. Friedman

Cantor Committee

Rev. A. Chaseman, Chairman
Mr. H. Kamenetsky
Mr. H. L. Eber
Mr. S. Haveson
Mr L. Mirkin
Mr. J. Lightstone

Program Committee

Mr. M. Hanin, Chairman
Mr. M. Spicker
Rabbi H. J. Beck
Mr. L. Holstein

Ball Committee

Mr. Louis Eber, Chairman
Mrs. M. Refowich, Chairlady
Mr. H. Diamond
Mr. S. Yedinsky
Mrs H. Weiner
Mrs L. Eber
Mrs. L. Holstein

Inter-Church Night Committee

Mr. L. Holstein, Chairman
Mr. E. Liner
Mr. L. Eber
Mr. J. Lightstone
Mr. H. Cotler
Mr. M. Hanin
Mrs. M. Eber
Mrs. H. Diamond
Mrs. N. Epstein
Mrs. I. Brill
Mrs. A. Mendlesohn
Rev. A. Chaseman
Mr. M. Spicker

Banquet Committee

Mr. H. Diamond, Chairman
Mrs. H. Weiner, Chairlady
Mrs. M. Refowich
Mrs. J. Gable
Mrs. E. Liner

Ladies' Night in charge of the Sisterhood

Dedication

Respectfully dedicated to those who during the past seventy years have labored faithfully and earnestly to make Oheb Zedeck what it is to-day.

As we enjoy the benefits and privileges which their efforts have made possible, may we be stirred to emulate their example and to make the present and future history of the Oheb Zedeck Synagogue a credit to those who have labored under the heat and burden of the day.

The success of the Synagogue depends not merely on the membership it possesses, but on the faith, virtue and actions of its individual members.

The General Committee.

Pottsville, Pa.

PRESENT OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

HERMAN J BECK, Rabbi	A. CHASEMAN, Cantor
LOUIS HOLSTEIN, President	HARRY DIAMOND, Vice-President
LOUIS EBER, Secretary	HARRY WEINER, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

J. LIGHTSTONE, Chairman

H. L. EBER	S. POLLACK (Deceased)
J. ROSENZWEIG	S. S. SEAMAN
H. KAMENETSKY	M. HANIN

PRESIDENTS OF THE OHEB ZEDECK SYNAGOGUE SINCE 1856

Emanuel Strauss	H. Hecter	S. Bergstein
Jacob Greenwald	I. Krotusky	H. L. Eber
Silas Strauss	Sam Cohen	J. Rothstein
Louis Levy	Israel Gellert	Harry Diamond
L. Harris	Morris H. Spicker	Louis Holstein

Rabbi Herman J. Beck

CITY OF POTTSVILLE

PENNSYLVANIA

LaMAR L. PRITCHARD, Mayor

GREETINGS

Kindly permit me to say that, as Mayor of the City of Pottsville, I always found the Jewish people law-abiding citizens and an asset to any community. They are progressive, conservative and always ready to contribute to any worthy cause.

I want to congratulate the Congregation Oheb Zedeck on their Seventieth Anniversary and give my heartiest greetings for a bright and prosperous future.

Sincerely yours,

LaMAR L. PRITCHARD,
Mayor, City of Pottsville, Pa.

POTTSVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

POTTSVILLE, PA.

October 1, 1926.

Rabbi Herman J. Beck, Director,
Oheb Zedeck Community Chest,
Pottsville, Penna.

My dear Mr. Beck:

It is a pleasure indeed for the Chamber of Commerce to send greetings to the Congregation Oheb Zedeck upon the occasion of the celebration of its 70th Anniversary. This Congregation has done much to uplift community life in Pottsville, and the hope of this body is that it may move on toward the century mark in increasing strength and influence.

Very truly yours,

W. J. BIEVER,
President.

Rev. A. Chaseman
Cantor

L. Mirkin
Principal Hebrew School

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

POTTSVILLE, PA.

September 29, 1926.

To the Members of the Oheb Zedeck
Congregation of Pottsville, Pa.

Greetings:

The week of November 22nd, I have no doubt, marks a time of rejoicing on the part of the Jewish people of our city. Another milestone has been passed; another year of progress has been made, so that this week you look back upon 70 years of glorious effort in the building of Godly character among the members of this Congregation.

It is therefore a source of real pleasure for me to extend to the members of Oheb Zedeck Congregation a word of hearty greeting. May you at this time, using the words of Rabbi Beck, in his New Year's message to you, "Thank God for the past, that you may take heart and add to your courage and zeal."

H. W. EWIG,
General Secretary,
Central Y. M. C. A., Pottsville, Pa.

E. C. LUTHER

CONSULTING AND MINING ENGINEER

319 Thompson Building
POTTSVILLE, PA.

September 28, 1926.

Rabbi Herman J. Beck,
309 West Norwegian St.,
Pottsville, Penna.

My dear Rabbi Beck:

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you and the Congregation Oheb Zedeck on the celebration of its Seventieth Anniversary during the week of November 22, 1926. It should be a source of great satisfaction to the members of this Congregation to be able at this time to review its many accomplishments during those years.

The community at large owes much to the support which has been given by this Congregation to all worthy movements and the influence for good which it has at all times exerted.

With your many other friends I wish you ever-increasing success in the realization of those ideals for which you have heretofore striven with a spirit which has merited the high respect in which your Congregation has always been held.

Very truly yours,

E. C. LUTHER.

L. Holstein, President

TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

WEST MARKET STREET, ABOVE THIRD
POTTSVILLE, PENNA.
ROBERT A. BAUSCH, Minister

September 27, 1926.

Rabbi Herman J. Beck,
Pottsville, Penna.

My dear Brother:

The Congregation of Trinity Reformed Church, Pottsville, Penna., extends greetings to the Congregation Oheb Zedeck, Pottsville, Penna., on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the Congregation Oheb Zedeck.

We rejoice with you on this your 70th birthday. For a period of three score years and ten your Congregation has sought to develop the religious life of her people. The blessings of the one living and only true God has rested upon your work and worship.

May the good God and Father of us all continue to bless you. May He make His face to shine upon you. May He strengthen you for your every task and continue to use the Congregation Oheb Zedeck in building up His Kingdom of holy love in the life of our community.

Fraternally yours,

ROBERT A. BAUSCH,
Minister of Trinity Reformed Church.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

POTTSVILLE, PA.
HOWARD D. TALBOTT, Minister

Pottsville, Pa., September 28, 1926.

Rabbi Herman J. Beck, Director
Oheb Zedeck Community Church,
Pottsville, Pa.

My dear Rabbi Beck:

I notice your Congregation is looking forward to the celebration of your 70th Anniversary during the week of November 22. I trust that all the expectations of your Congregation for this anniversary may be abundantly realized.

It is a good thing to pause occasionally and review the sacrifices which have been made and the efforts put forth in order to win the blessings which we enjoy.

I feel quite confident that your anniversary exercises will deepen and enrich the spiritual lives of your Congregation. May every expectation be realized.

Sincerely yours,

HOWARD D. TALBOTT.

Harry Diamond, Vice-President

THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

POTTSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

CHARLES W. KITTO, Pastor

October 5, 1926.

The Rev. Herman J. Beck,
Pottsville, Penna.

My dear Rabbi Beck:

I have before me your announcement concerning the plan of you and your Congregation to celebrate your Seventieth Anniversary. May I in this manner convey to you my sincerest congratulations along with the heartiest felicitations of the Congregation I serve.

We are too much indebted to Jewish history and scriptures to allow an event such as you propose to celebrate to pass by without offering our sincerest greetings.

My own association with you personally and others of your Congregation, and the recollection of the very fine courtesy shown me when I spent an evening in your synagogue, constrain me to say that Pottsville is genuinely benefitted by its Jewish population. The whole community will want to share in the festivities of your Seventieth Anniversary.

With reassurances of my very warmest greetings, I am

Fraternally yours,

C. W. KITTO

Harry Weiner
Treasurer

L. Eber
Secretary

History of Oheb Zedeck Congregation and the Jewish Organizations in Pottsville.

In the year 1856 a small band of recently immigrated German Jews decided to unite for the purpose of religious worship. They were only ten in number, but what they lacked in quantity they more than equalled in determination. They were imbued with the spirit that had driven their race onward and always forward toward the accomplishment of that which they conceived as their ideal. That ideal was never a selfish one, from the days when the great Prophet Moses sought relief from oppression for his people to the present day, when the modern prophets, such as the late Dr. Theodore Hertzl, sought the reunion of a scattered race in the land which was rightfully theirs—in Palestine.

Thus, true to the most holy of Jewish teachings and ideals, we find these ten Jews, residing in Pottsville, laying the foundation for what was to become a synagogue which reflected credit not only to its founders, its developers and its present officials, but to the whole community. These men were sadly lacking financially, and their fight to maintain unity was a valiant one against almost overwhelming odds. But their motives were pure and there was no force sufficiently strong to daunt them.

As these men must ever be held in reverence by Jewish posterity in Pottsville, it is well to list their names here, as found in old authentic records. They were Emanuel Strauss, Jacob Schloss, Jacob Greenwald, Abraham Loeb, Abram Reif, Samuel Isberger, L. Harris, M. Greenwald, Emanuel Abrahams and one whose name has not come down to us. With the common sense peculiar to their race, these pioneers recognized first the necessity of absolute unity and second the fact that in order to assure religious unity it was essential they procure ground for use as a cemetery.

Their next step was to establish regular meeting nights. These meetings were held in the respective homes of the men, and it was thus they conducted their first services, and thus they worshipped the God who had given them strength and fortitude through all their vicissitudes. For a period of three years they continued these services, holding them each Friday night and Saturday morning. At the end of that time they were enabled to rent the old Thompson Hall, paying a rental fee of one hundred dollars per year. The paying of such a large sum was possible only because of many individual sacrifices dutifully and uncomplainingly performed. And it was in this manner and in this building that the foundation was laid for public worship.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

H. L. Eber

H. Kamenetsky

Jacob Rosensweig

Jonas Lightstone

S. Pollack
(Deceased)

Samuel S. Seaman

M. Hanin

Then they were confronted with another grave problem, a problem which required immediate solution if they were to continue to progress. They must have a minister who could provide the Holy Scrolls. After diligent search they found their man in Isaac Straus, who was installed as the first Jewish minister in Pottsville. And it was a choice which was never regretted, as he worked with them and strove as mightily as they did, and it was Rev. Straus who provided for the congregation the first Sefer Thorah, or Holy Book. A touching example of the willingness and devotion of this band of heroic men is disclosed by a perusal of their books recording the minutes of their meetings. These records show that it was customary for them to change officers every few months, thus granting unto all the privilege of at some time sharing in the government of the congregation. By this time there were twenty families counted among the congregation. This was about 1861.

And then, in the year 1861, the nation's chief issued a call from the capitol in Washington a call for young men to lay down their tools and their books, to bid farewell to their loved ones, and to offer to their country that dearest of all human possessions, their lives. Mr. Abe Kuhn, having heard the summons of the President, asked for volunteers from among the men of the congregation, then assembled. And from out of the meagre congregation of twenty families, there immediately stepped forth five men. These five were subsequently accepted, and all of them saw active service.

The close of the War in 1865 did not mean to these Jews that they could now lay aside their patriotism. They continued to serve the land which they had adopted as their own in various services. It was seen that the lads who had nobly gone forth to suffer and sacrifice that the nation might continue in unity would require attention. Many of them were rendered helpless by wounds which necessitated amputation; upon others the ravages of horrible diseases had left ineradicable scars or incurable infirmities. Naturally, these warriors were thrown upon the mercy of those for whom they had offered their all, and efforts were made to alleviate their sufferings by placing them in institutions, which was done by the national and state governments. But outside aid was necessary, aid of a financial nature. This emergency was met with characteristic promptitude and thoroughness by the Jews of Pottsville. Special committees were organized, their purpose being to supervise all collections and contributions for the helping of the crippled in the hospitals of Pennsylvania. That their efforts in this direction were not superficial is evidenced by the fact that in the pages of the Miners Journal, issue of May, 1865, there is printed a statement of appreciation of Jewish aid throughout the State by the Governor of the Commonwealth himself, Governor Pollack. Further appreciation of Jewish aid, this specifically directed to the Pottsville congregation, was manifested in a communication received by the minister, Reverend Oppenheim, mailed June 9, 1865, by Mayor Henry, of Philadelphia. The letter is here printed verbatim:

Israel Gellert (Deceased)
Past President

Phillip Yedinsky
Active in all Congregational matters

"Philadelphia, June 9, 1865.

"My Dear Reverend Oppenheim:

"I had the pleasure of this day receiving from you by the mayor of our city the sum of $255.75, being the amount of your subscription to the U. S. soldiers and Sailors' Home of Pennsylvania, for which I return to you our thanks.

"H. Martin, Secretary."

The above missive, and the printed article by the Governor in the Miners Journal are conclusive proof that the Jews of Pottsville were early and often active in charitable work.

There is no record, apparently, of the date of Reverend Oppenheim's advent, but the town records disclose that he died in the year 1873; that he was laid to rest in Oheb Zedeck cemetery, and that his funeral was observed by the closing of all stores, regardless of the creeds of the proprietors. By tacit understanding, tribute was paid to the passing of a great man by the cessation of all business on that day.

Another person who was very active in serving the congregation at this time was Mr. Jacobs, who was vice-president of the congregation for many years. Mr. Jacobs was the father of Mrs. Max Gellert and the late Louis Jacobs, both well known and highly respected in Pottsville.

And now there was created for American Jewry a new epoch. Under the leadership of Reverend Dr. David Einhorn and Reverend Dr. Isaac M. Wise there occurred for the first time a nation-wide split in Jewish congregations, following their suggestions for a new ritual for services in the Synagogues. In Pottsville, as elsewhere, the rift did not fail to appear, and at the termination of a long struggle, the reform element won. This schism occurred in 1868, and two years later the Pottsville congregation of twenty members purchased a plot of ground, which is the site of the present Synagogue, and erected thereon a building consisting of two rooms. These two rooms were used for services and meetings for eighteen years. The ground upon which this new place of worship was built cost the congregation $7,000.

Between the years 1870 and 1888 there had been a continuous influx of immigrants from Russia and Poland. These people formed congregations for orthodox worship, one of them meeting on Eleventh Street, the other on West Market Street.

During that time when the congregation met on Eleventh Street, they were honored in having Rabbi Moses Phillips as their leader. After serving here for five years, he departed for other fields, but was recalled and again served five years. He was the head and senior partner of the firm of Phillips-Jones Co., makers of the Van Heusen line of collars for men. Rabbi Phillips was born in Suwalk, Poland, in 1844, and received his Rabbinical training there, completing his studies at the age of nineteen years. His family is credited with having done much of benefit to the Jews of Pottsville.

E. Deull (Deceased)
Past Trustee

Charles Diamond
Past Chairman, Hebrew School

His late son, Isaac L. Phillips, was instrumental in his time in accomplishing much in Jewish enterprize here and created many new activities. He was one of the most prominent merchants in the country. Arrangements are being completed by the congregation of Oheb Zedeck to commemorate these men with special services in their honor on all Memorial Days.

The year 1898 began a new era for Pottsville Jewry. It was found impossible to continue to exist and progress without unity. A meeting was held, in which Israel Gellert, Harris Rubinsky, Adolph Prince and Phillip Yedinsky participated, and ere it was called to adjournment they were agreed to amalgamate. Since that year there has been one Synagogue in Pottsville. It was also in that year that the congregation was again called upon to give of its men for defense of the flag. How many volunteered for the Spanish-American War it is impossible to say, for there have been no records preserved, but it is certain that there were many of them, and that, as usual, the Jews of Pottsville did not shirk their duty.

Year by year immigration increased, and many of these newcomers settled in and around Pottsville. The two rooms were no longer adequate, and under H. L. Eber there was a movement started to erect a new Synagogue. The officers responsible for this move were H. L. Eber, president; H. Kamenetzky, vice-president; H. Diamond, secretary; Chas. Diamond, assistant secretary, and the following trustees: M. Refowich, E. Deull and M. Rothstein. The building committee was composed of H. Rubinsky, I. Gellert, J. Rothstein, I. Brenner, H. L. Rosenzweig and S. Bergstein. The solociting committee consisted of Phillip Yedinsky, Charles Diamond, M. Levy and L. Refowich.

Building operations were started in the year 1912, and the following year the dedication of the new Temple was celebrated. Rabbi Morais, of New York City, officiated at the dedication, delivering an address, while a similar address was made by Reverend Masliansky, also of New York City.

Then, for the third time in the history of Pottsville Jewry, the congregation sent forth its sons to fight for the flag which they had made their own. Their response to the call for volunteers, issued by the late President, Woodrow Wilson, was not a half-hearted one, and many more were called by conscription. The congregation points with just pride to the following honor list: Sol Spicker, Harry Cohn, Harry Holstein, Harry J. Weiner, Mose Eber, Ben Eber, Dr. Alfred Bergstein, Milton Bergstein, Emanuel Yedinsky, Emanuel Yedinsky, Louis Rosenzweig, Leo Lefkowitz, Abe Lefkowitz, Jacob Weiner, Louis Seaman, Abe Gittleman, Jacob Cohen, Louis Flato and Jacob Gable.

When President Wilson later appealed for contributions from the people for Near East relief, Pottsville Jewry did not lag behind. In 1918 the Jewish Distribution Committee, of New York City, commenced conducting a campaign throughout the nation for funds to be used to aid the boys who had seen service across the water and also for war sufferers. Again the congregation of Oheb Zedeck plunged into the work with exemplary zeal and

Rabbi Bernstein
In charge 1878

L. Refowich
Member of the Soliciting Committee
when the Synagogue was built

appointed a committee composed of M. Spicker, chairman; Jacob Gellert, secretary, and S. S. Weiss, treasurer, for this work. These three men, with the aid of the Jews of Pottsville, raised $9,000. Not satisfied that they had done their part, and done it nobly, these three patriots toured Shenandoah, Tamaqua and Ashland, securing in all $17,000.

That November day, when all the world went wild with joy at the news of peace, the Jews vented their happiness by parading the streets of the town, with H. Diamond acting as marshal. But there was a note of sadness running through all this apparent happiness, an undertone of sorrow, for many of the boys would see their homeland and loved ones no more. And in this experience the Jews of Pottsville also participated, for two of their heroes had fallen, one, Sol Spicker, in action "over there," and the other, Harry Cohn, at Fort Sheridan, Ill.

The body of Harry Cohen was one of the first to be buried in Pottsville during the war. The funeral was held late in the afternoon, so that the populace could attend en masse. This funeral was the largest ever held in Pottsville. The body of the other hero, Sol Spicker, lies at rest in France.

June 14, 1920, is a day likely to live long in the memory of every Jew living at that time and will be regarded by coming generations as an important date in the history of the race. In Pottsville, on that date, the congregation of Oheb Zedeck held an inspiring pageant in celebration of the Balfour Declaration, which restored to these people once again their native land, Palestine. Jerusalem was again theirs, and the Turk had been driven therefrom. About one thousand local Jews marched behind Pottsville's Third Brigade Band. Hazleton, Shenandoah, Mahanoy City, Mt. Carmel, Coal Dale and Lansford were represented in this monster demonstration. Miss E. Chinitz, representing America; Miss Diamond, typifying the Jewish nation; the Misses Levy, Kamenetsky and Antokolitz, symbolizing England, France and Italy, respectively, followed immediately behind the band. For the first time in the history of the city the Jewish flag was carried and displayed on the streets of Pottsville. Following the parade there was a mass meeting held in the Synagogue, with the following speakers imparting the proper solemnity of the occasion to their audience: The Rabbis Ezralowitz, of New York City, and Gobba, of Philadelphia; Mayor Pierce Mortimer and Professor B. S. Simonds. There were other speakers, among them Judges H. O. Bechtel and R. H. Koch. Hebrew hymns were sung, and the day was one which will never be forgotten by those who witnessed or participated in the celebration.

Activities of the congregation at that time were progressing splendidly, thanks to the untiring efforts of Rabbi Rosenson, who had charge of the congregation. Various clubs were organized under his supervision. Late Friday night services were inaugurated and were well attended. And for the first time in the history of the congregation girls were confirmed with impres-

In Memorian

Sol. Spicker
Killed in Action

Jacob Cohen
Died in Camp

sive ceremonies. His sudden death on December the fourth, 1921, was a grievous shock to the Jews of Pottsville. His funeral was one of the most largely attended that was ever held in Pottsville. Rabbi Haas, of Reading, then of Harrisburg, delivered the funeral oration, in which he eulogized Rabbi Rosenson.

In 1921 the congregation, under S. Bergstein, held a bazaar in the Armory for the purpose of raising sufficient funds for the burning of the mortgage on Oheb Zedeck Synagogue. Ten thousand dollars was the sum required, and due to the untiring efforts of Messrs. Louis Holstein, general chairman; Milton Lilienthal, general secretary; Harry Weiner, treasurer, and the following trustees: Harry Diamond, the late Charles Diamond, Joseph Harrison, the late Jacob Refowich, Harry Harris, Samuel Gittleman, Abe Weiner, Milton Bergstein, Moe Refowich, Morris Spicker, Louis Marks, Max Lewin, Jacob Gable and Samuel Seaman, and of all the women of the congregation, the project, which was splendidly supported by the general public, both Jewish and non-Jewish, the feat was accomplished. The mortgage was burned by G. Cohen, of West End Avenue, at the Synagogue, after which the entire congregation celebrated with a jubilee at the Armory.

Steady progress was made after that. Under the leadership of Louis Holstein, who is the present president, the membership of the congregation grew, and additions and alterations were continually being made to the Temple. Due to the hard work and earnestness of H. Diamond, L. Holstein, I Chinitz, J. Lightstone, H. L. Eber, M. Spicker, L. Refowich, H. Weiner, S. Bergstein, L. Eber, J. Rosenzweig and I. Weiner the vestry rooms were rebuilt, so as to make suitable housing for the Hebrew school and Community Center, and the cemetery was improved and beautified under the direction of J. Lightstone.

With the advent of Rabbi Herman J. Beck as religious representative, in 1925, a new day dawned for Pottsville Jewry. This man possessed an inexhaustible supply of energy and a temperament admirably adapted to the task which lay before him. And the task was a difficult one. He was expected to straighten out the financial difficulties of the congregation and to satisfy the desires of the members of that congregation, whether those members longed for religious or social satiation, and Rabbi Beck subsequently proved himself equal to the job.

His first action was the organization of the Ein Jacob and Mishnayotch clubs. Thus, from the very start, he managed to inculcate into his congregation a new spirit of life and fire. His lectures on Jewish history were always well attended. The pleasure instinct of the young element he satisfied with his Friday night services. Reorganization of the Sunday School was the next move, and the seven teachers of his choice soon won the respect of both pupil and parent, thus proving the excellency of the Rabbi's judgment. And finally, from out the smoldering ashes of the Ladies' Aid Society he caused the Phoenix of the Sisterhood to arise, which under his guidance has

THE SAILOR PLANING MILL AND LUMBER YARDS

WHATEVER YOU BUILD---USE OUR LUMBER

Located one square East of Pottsville Hospital

done valuable works, among them the creation of special funds for the Synagogue.

The junior congregation was placed in charge of Mr. L. Mirkin, the principal of the Hebrew School, and it was through his efforts that the school was reorganized. Mr. Mirkin is a capable man for the post of principal, which position he still retains, having received his pedagogical training in Palestine. Mr. Mirkin's success was nothing short of phenomenal. In addition to various confirmations performed under his supervision his pupils managed to make a brilliant showing in an examination conducted by Rabbi Beck and the educational committee. One of the numerous proofs of his astounding ability in pedagogy is that on Saturday mornings and during all the Holidays the pupils conduct their own services and have one of their members participate in the chanting of prayers. The school now consists of four classes, and the oldest class is capable of reciting from the Prophets. Another person whose name must always be mentioned when the Hebrew School is discussed is the late Charles Diamond. He gave of his energy and ability without stint, working incessantly for the good of the school. He was a capable executive. His death on January 22, 1922, at the age of forty-one, was a distinct loss not only to the school, or to the Jews, but to all the people of Pottsville.

The Hebrew School is conducted by a board of education, appointed by the president of the Synagogue. The present board of education consists of J. S. Rosenzweig, chairman; Rabbi H. J. Beck, Rev. A. Chaseman, H. Kamenetzky and S. S. Seaman. The death of S. Pollack created a vacancy in the board, which has as yet not been filled. Much credit is due to J. Rosenzweig, who, as chairman, has given much of his time and ability to make the Hebrew School a successful institution.

To return to Rabbi Herman Beck, it may be said truthfully that he is unprecedently popular with both Jews and Gentiles in Pottsville. He is a member of the Pottsville Ministerial Association, chairman of the program committee of the Rotary Club, member of the Elks Club, chaplain of the local American Legion and is much in demand to speak in various churches in and around the town. He participated actively in the new community hotel and Y. M. C. A. movements. Seder services were inaugurated by him, and he solved the financial question by organizing a community budget, by which method $21,000 was raised and the congregation put on a sound basis financially. Another of his accomplishments was the formation of a budget system, whereby all national and religious institutions throughout the United States and Palestine receive support.

It is not an idle guess that Rabbi Beck will linger long after he has passed as a fond memory in the minds of the people of Pottsville, Jew and Gentile, for it was because of his genial energy that they were placed in congenial relation to one another. It was Rabbi Beck who created a better understanding between them and urged them to work for the common good of the biggest little town in the anthracite region—Pottsville.

Compliments of

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HOLSUM

BREAD

F. J. McLANACHAN, Mgr.

Pottsville, Pa.

The congregation is now free of all debt on the Synagogue. The recent mortgages, which had been created for the purpose of altering and adding to the building, have been canceled, thanks to a personal contribution of $2,000 from the late S. S. Weiss and an additional $1,500 contributed by Messrs. Sol Weiss, Wm. Weiss; S. S. Weiss, Jr., of Mauch Chunk; Sol Prince, Isadore Prince and Jacob Zimmerman, in honor of S. S. Weiss, to the memory of whom the congregation of the Synagogue will, in the near future, dedicate one of the windows of the Temple.

Each night the doors of the Synagogue are open to the various organizations which may desire to use it for their activities. And it is here that mention must be made of the present Cantor, Reverend A. Chaseman, who serves as Chason Mohel, and it is in no small part due to him that the Friday night, Saturday morning and Holiday services are conducted with beauty and thoroughness. This is the second position which Reverend Chaseman has held since coming to this country, about twenty-five years ago. His first was in Portsmouth, Va., which position he held for twenty years.

Seventy years is not a long period of time in the history of the world, a nation, a state, a church, or even a congregation. But it is not the time elapsed, but the use to which that time was put, which counts in the final tally. And when we take into consideration the accomplishments of a handful of Jews in Pottsville, which accomplishments were consummated only by the expenditure of tremendous energy, and the use of a vast amount of persistence and implicit faith, then seventy years means very much.

To-day, with its splendid array of organizations, the Oheb Zedeck congregation is proud of its achievements. And the pride is justified. When we glance over the histories of these various organizations as described in this book and see how the Sisterhood, the Women's Council, the Hadassah, the Ladies' Benevolent Aid Society, the Y. M. H. A., the Chevrah Kadisha, the Camp Fire Girls and the Boy Scouts have become possible only after many long struggles with adverse conditions we realize that the future of Israel in this community is assured. May the memory of those brave ones who strove for the present greatness of the congregation furnish inspiration to those now carrying on the work, and those still to come.

We are indebted beyond measure to our kind advertisers, who with their liberality have made possible the publication of this book without any expense being added to our budget. We urge our membership and families to keep in mind those men of business whose advertisements are to be found within these pages.

And as a final word to the men and women of our beloved congregation: Let us all stand shoulder to shoulder as did our predecessors.

May the Lord of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob send blessings of peace and harmony to Israel and all the world.

SEVENTY YEARS'

PROGRESS — GROWTH — SERVICE

OHEB ZEDECK CONGREGATION

HEARTIEST GREETINGS

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History of Oheb Zedeck Sisterhood

Although they could always be relied upon to lend their material, mental and moral support to any religious or civic project which was undertaken by their brethren, it was not until the year 1909 that the Jewish women of Pottsville formed a society for the purpose of aiding in such matters. Realizing that best results are obtained through absolute unity, twelve of these earnest women congregated in the home of Mrs. Moe Refowich on the night of February 14, that year, and formed an organization which was soon to become a factor in the religious and social life of the community. The original members of this society were Mrs. M. Refowich, Mrs. E. Deull, Mrs. L. Refowich, Mrs. L. Holstein, Mrs. Muscowish, Mrs. Kalmonson, Mrs. H. L. Eber, Mrs. L. Shore, Mrs. I. Antokolitz, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Bergstein and Mrs. J. Cohen.

From the very inception of the society there was a lack of schism, which was prophetic of the long life of real service which lay before it. The first officers of the organization were elected that night unanimously. They were Mrs. M. Refowich, president; Mrs. E. Deull, vice-president; Mrs. L. Holstein, secretary; Mrs. L. Refowich, treasurer; Mrs. Muscowish, Mrs. Kalmonson and Mrs. H. L. Eber, trustees.

By-laws, embodied in four articles, were adopted. The first article consisted of sixteen sections. According to the first section in Article I, the name adopted for the society was "The Ladies' Oheb Zedeck Auxiliary of Pottsville, Pa." The remaining fifteen sections in this article were devoted to defining the object, creating the government and outlining plans of the future activities of the body. The dispensation of charity was set forth as the first object of the society, and under this broad term was included the rendering of aid to the sick and co-operation in the event of an epidemic of contagious disease with any movement which might be started to prevent its spread as much as possible and to help alleviate the sufferings of those afflicted. It was also provided that, in the event of one of their members becoming seriously ill, two women, appointed by the president, were to keep watch during the long and lonely hours of the night. Verily, here was a real spirit of sacrifice and service! Even Death was to be robbed of some of his grimness by these women, for the by-laws provided that when one of the members was visited by the Reaper eight of her sisters were to take charge of all funeral arrangements, thus relieving the stricken family of that much anxiety.

The routine order of business was outlined in the third article, while the fourth was confined to the definition of the duties of the officers. It was agreed to hold the meetings monthly, and the president urged perfect attendance at each one of them.

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At their second meeting the society was already engaged in charitable work, and at their third they found it necessary to appoint sick committees. In order to insure against any possibility of fradulent misrepresentation in requisitions for charity the entire board of trustees was appointed by the president an investigating committee. Requests for charitable aid were investigated, and the aid was given only to the worthy.

At the meeting held in August, that year, we find an attendance of twenty-one members, and at the following meeting there is a resolution passed to admit the girls to the society. And at this time they termed themselves the "Ladies' Auxiliary of Oheb Zedeck Lodge, No. 136."

By February, 1910, the membership of the society had increased to sixty, and social activities commenced with a festival, which was held on the twenty-third of that month in the Y. M. H. A. hall. Due to their zeal in dispensing charity, in the form of food and clothing, to the needy, there was never at any time a large amount of money in the treasury. The original officers held their positions until May, 1910, when another election was held. However, election did not mean change in most cases, as the incumbents had gained the respect and admiration of those whom they governed and were re-elected.

Through the passing years they performed many acts of mercy. They gave freely to the sick and several times rendered financial aid to families visited by poverty or death. Transportation was donated to some who required the treatment given at a sanitarium. And in the interval between February, 1909, and January, 1912, they resorted to social activities only three times for the purpose of boosting finances. At the meeting of January, 1912, it was decided to meet every second Sunday in the month. Before this there had been no specified time for meeting.

At the meeting held in February, 1913, it was decided to adopt the title "Ladies' Hebrew Aid Society." On May 5th of that year a special meeting was held for the purpose of organizing a Sunday School. The meeting was held in the Oheb Zedeck Synagogue and attended by ten of the members. With the assistance of the Reverend Dr. Kahn and M. Refowich, these three persons were selected as teachers: Mrs. L. Holstein, Lillie Lilienthal and Annie Gittleman. Because of the fact that the society was contributing much to various charities and religious movements there was at no time any great balance on hand. So low were funds by this time that it was found necessary to solicit outside help. For this task the president delegated two of the ladies to Hazleton, two to Reading, two to Wilkes-Barre and two to Mt. Carmel and Shamokin. Honest zeal was shown by all these women, among whom was the president, Mrs. M. Refowich herself, and their crusade into foreign territory netted them a neat sum.

From 1915 to 1921 there was nothing of unusual import recorded. Meetings were held with more or less regularity, some of the hot summer months

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being missed; succor was given the needy; a dance was held to raise funds for the benefit of the school, and the meetings were still being held by turns in the homes of the members. And from the year of its inception until 1921 the society was guided by Mrs. Moe Refowich. Then, at the meeting held in September of that year, a new president ascended the chair and took over the reins. This was Mrs. H. Weiner.

Monetary donations were made at the March, 1923, meeting toward the furnishing of the Vestry rooms in the Synagogue, which had been remodeled into a Community Center. In February, 1924, motion was made, seconded and passed that the society purchase new side fixtures for the Synagogue, which was done.

Suggestion was made at the meeting of October, 1920, that the society be changed into a Sisterhood. There was, however, no definite action taken on the matter. In 1924 the subject was revived, and interest in the project grew to such proportions that it became necessary to invite a member of the Sisterhood of Reading to appear before the body and deliver a lecture describing the work done by that organization. This step was taken at the December meeting that year.

During January and February of 1925 the society bought and laid new carpet in the Synagogue and hired a man to varnish the school interior. Following a lengthy discussion at the meeting of July, 1925, there was definite action taken on the Sisterhood idea.

Voting on a motion made at the August, 1925, meeting, final decision was made to affiliate with the Sisterhood movement. From that time to the present day the organization which started as the "Ladies' Auxiliary of Pottsville" has been known as the "Oheb Zedeck Sisterhood of Pottsville." It was agreed to meet the third Wednesday of each month. A committee appointed for the purpose of planning for the development and welfare of the sisterhood was composed of the following ladies: Mrs. S. Gellert, Mrs. L. Altshuler, Mrs. H. Weiner, Mrs. J. Rosenzweig and Mrs. J. Lightstone. It was also agreed that the sisterhood should purchase prayer books, which were to be placed in the Synagogue for use on the Holidays and which were to be the property of the Synagogue. Thus through the years following the formation of an auxiliary did this body progress steadily toward the attainment of their ultimate ideal, which was to render service to the Synagogue and to the community and the needy persons therein.

It was due to the efforts and the guidance of Rabbi Herman Beck that the Sisterhood became more than an idle dream. He had come to Pottsville on the 15th day of August, 1925, and he had brought with him untiring energy and ambitions for the future greatness of his congregation, and it was during his second week as Rabbi of Oheb Zedeck that he organized the Sisterhood. The following officers were elected to govern the order:

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Mrs. Moe Refowich, president; Mrs. H. Weiner, first vice-president; Mrs. Louis Holstein, second vice-president; Mrs. Joe Harrison, recording secretary; Mrs. Louis Eber, financial secretary, and Mrs. M. Spicker, treasurer. The Sisterhood was made responsible for the buying of kitchen utensils, and they were also to supply uniform prayer books for use, as mentioned above, during the Holidays.

Social activities commenced with an installation banquet. This was followed by a Chanuka banquet in December. Both these affairs were marked successes. Arrangements were also made to hold a card party weekly, to raise money for the community chest. That these parties were attended with success is shown by the fact that the Sisterhood has contributed $500 to that worthy cause. This body arranged the Passover Seder and in March, 1926, sponsored a concert, with Robert Braun and his pupils starring. Tremendous success rewarded the efforts of the sisterhood in all their social undertakings.

In September Mrs. H. Weiner succeeded Mrs. M. Refowich to the presidency, the latter accepting the post of treasurer. Mrs. L. Holstein became first vice-president; Mrs. J. Gellert, second vice-president; Mrs. H. Cooper, recording secretary, and Mrs. L. Eber, financial secretary.

To Mrs. Moe Refowich belongs much credit for the success of this organization. During the fourteen years she served as president of the Ladies' Aid Society she labored faithfully day and night and continued to toil after the society became the Sisterhood. Until last year she was president of that body, and much of the splendid work done by the Sisterhood was possible only because of her untiring energy. And while she is no longer president, it is certain that she will continue to serve as she has always served, without any consideration of self, and her past accomplishments will ever furnish inspiration to her successors.

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The Ezras Achim Lodge

For the purpose of forming an organization, benevolent in nature, H. Kamenetsky, I Chinitz and A. Bass called a meeting on September 23, 1906. The result was the Ezras Achim Lodge, whose activities include succor to the poor, benefits to the sick and loans to the needy. These loans range in amount from twenty-five to one hundred dollars, and this feature has proven so popular that at the present time there is an average sum of $8,000 involved in outstanding loans each year. The installment payment plan is used in the return of the principal.

In 1916 the lodge celebrated its tenth anniversary with appropriate ceremonies, and in 1926 the twentieth anniversary was observed with addresses by H. Kamenetsky and Rabbi Beck at a picnic.

A modern feature of the lodge was established in the year 1924, when each member was insured, under sixty years of age for the sum of three hundred dollars, and members above that age for one hundred and fifty dollars.

The present officers of the lodge are J. Rosenzweig, president; I. Rudnich, vice-president; H. Cotter, treasurer; H. Kamenetsky, secretary, and the following trustees: B. Snyder, I. Dublestein, S. Havison, A. Yarowsky, H. Martin, S. March, M. Kutcher and A. Solomon. Mr. Kamenetsky has served as secretary since the founding of the organization, and his services have been invaluable to the lodge.

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Council of Jewish Women

On February 15, 1915, the Jewish women of Pottsville formed a society known as the Jewish Women's Council. In this manner they became an integer in a national organization, subject to its rules and participating in its activities. The National Council of Jewish Women boasts that its service is for faith and humanity. Under its sheltering wing the homeless girl, the immigrant and the neighborhood family find aids to their material comfort. They are sheltered, and they are educated. It keeps its local branches informed of its activities through several publications, among them "The Immigrant," a monthly bulletin of information on immigration problems and suggestions for serving the immigrant. Besides assisting stranded refugees and immigrants to find relatives or friends, it conducts a Department of Farm and Rural Work, with field workers in seven states. In the rural districts the National Council, through its local branches, has established religious schools for the training of the child of the farm, provided circulating libraries, united the widely separated farm women in women's leagues and has formed English and citizenship classes in the rural districts. Its work is conducive to the production of better citizens, as by its efforts the outlook of these citizens is infinitely broadened, their educational horizon brightened and their standard of living raised to higher levels.

Among the first officers of the local Women's Council were Mrs. S. Weingert, president; Mrs. B. Rifkin, recording secretary, and Mrs. M. Spicker, corresponding secretary. It was decided to hold monthly meetings, said meetings to take place the first Tuesday of each month in the Y. M. H. A. rooms. In keeping with the policy and routine of the National Council, various committees were formed to carry on the work, as follows: Education, Peace and Arbitration, Immigrant Aid, Junior Auxiliary, Legislation, Religion and Religious Schools, Social Welfare, Blind and Deaf, Civic and Communal, Farmwork and Philanthrophy.

The tasks assigned to these committees are indicated by the titles of those committees. Some of them are not often called upon to function locally, such as, for instance, the Committee on Immigrant Aid. They have had only one case to cope with since their formation, but that one problem was solved with neatness and dispatch. Election of officers is held every year, but there has not been much change in officers since the original ones took their chairs. Mrs. M. Spicker, who held the original post of corresponding secretary, has never been without an official title in all the years of the council's existence. It was due to the efforts of this woman that the council remained intact during the past three years, dissolution having threatened

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often during that period. Rabbi Beck was also active in this matter, as in all others of importance to the Synagogue and society as a whole.

Semi-monthly card parties are held for the purpose of raising funds, as are also concerts, dances, etc. No funds are retained in the treasury, any balance existent at the end of the year being speedily distributed among the local hospitals, the Children's Home or donated to the sanitarium at Hamburg. Two-thirds of the finances accruing from payment of the yearly dues is used by the local branch, the other third being sent to the headquarters of the National Council, in New York City.

After eleven years of service since the council was organized by Mrs. Charles Long, of Wilkes-Barre, we find the women optimistic of the future and untroubled by the many threatened disruptions within the ranks. They believe in their mission and are ready to start a new term of service under the following officers: President, Mrs. N. Epstein; vice-president, Mrs. J. Gellert; treasurer, Mrs. S. Seaman; corresponding secretary, Mrs. H. Cooper, of Schuylkill Haven, and recording secretary, Mrs. A. Friedman. During the current season Mr. M. Spicker will conduct a class of instruction in Parliamentary Law in connection with the work done by the Educational Committee.

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The Hadassah

Prior to the year 1923, although there were many societies among the Jewish women of town taking care of local charity, there was really not one caring for outside needs. Knowing this and hearing of the good work which was being done by other cities the Pottsville Jewish women decided to organize the "Hadassah," which is a "sister organization to the Zion."

The step between deciding to have a club and really starting that club is a big one, but it was made easy by Mrs. A. Slomko, of the New York office, who on April 29, 1923, came to Pottsville, addressed both the men and women at the Synagogue and organized our new society. The following officers were elected at this meeting: Mrs. H. Diamond, president; Mrs. M. Robins, vice-president; Miss Rose Chaseman, corresponding secretary; Mrs. L. H. Altshuler, recording and financial secretary, and Mrs. J. Rosenzweig, treasurer. Thirty members were enrolled at the first meeting. The society at the present time numbers ninety-five and has for a member nearly every lady of the congregation.

The real work of the Hadassah is to make life just a little bit easier for those in Palestine.

All the members were now ready and full of zeal for their new work but they had nothing with which to start. Money was needed immediately, and so the first Hadassah dance was held, which was a big success, both socially and financially. The money gained this way, together with that made from a raffle of silverware, which was donated by Mrs. H. Diamond, provided enough to purchase two sewing machines. The first materials were donated by members of town.

The third machine was given to the Hadassah by the Ladies' Aid Society of Pottsville, and since then two more have been bought, the five being always in use on Monday nights when the ladies meet at the Community Center to do their sewing.

Since the first raffle two others have been held, that of a clock which was donated by Mrs. M. Robins and a choker donated by Mrs. S. Pollack.

Up to date $700 has been sent to Palestine for the Hospital Medical Organization, $129.31 for the Malted Milk Fund, $50 for the Luncheon and Penny School Fund, $50 for the Administration Fund, $150 for the Infants' Welfare Association, $25 for Educational Fund and $75 to help buy linens for the hospital. In addition to the money sent 225 garments have been made and shipped in Palestine and $460 has been sent as dues to the main office in New York.

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Just recently the women have started knitting and have sent eight sweaters and six caps with the garments. The so-called garments are two-piece bloomer dresses for the children of the Homeland.

One of the most interesting works done by the Hadassah was the Palestine Exhibition, which was held December 22, 1925. Much of the praise for the big success of the exhibition goes to Rabbi Beck. Mr. L. Mirkin also helped by purchasing the products.

The present officers are Mrs. H. Diamond, who has held her office since the society was organized in 1923; Mrs. J. Rosenzweig, Mrs. L. H. Altshuler, Gertrude Kamenetsky and Mrs. H. Steinberger.

The executive committee consists of Mrs. I. Dropkin, Mrs. I. Antokolitz, Mrs. J. Lightstone, Mrs. H. L. Eber, Mrs. S. Houser and Mrs. A. Fine.

Each year delegates are sent to the national convention, and each year we feel we are getting a little bit away from our state of infancy. We feel that we are justified in saying "The Hadassah is well launched and on its way to the accomplishment of big things."

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The Zionist District

On May 5, 1918, representatives of all the Jewish organizations of Pottsville convened for the purpose of forming a body identical with the Zionist movement in America. Reverend Newmark, H. L. Eber and J. Rothstein represented the Synagoguge. The result of the convention was the formation of what is known as the Zionist District. The original officers of the district were H. Diamond, president; H. Kamenetsky, secretary, and H. L. Eber, treasurer.

They subsequently proved a powerful influence in Jewish life in Pottsville, and it was through them that thousands of dollars were sent to Palestine. At the opening of the Hebrew University the district sponsored an affair held at the Moose Hall, which was attended by a throng which taxed the capacity of the spacious hall. Prominent speakers had been procured by the district for the occasion, and their addresses were appreciated.

During the eight years of its existence the district has done much to further the cause of Zionism, and through the efforts of Mr. I. Chinitz the membership has grown to eighty members. Words are inadequate in an attempt to convey any idea of the zeal and devotion with which Mr. Chinitz toiled, day and night, to upbuild the district. He must be considered the father of the Zionist movement in Pottsville. For many years as president of the Kerenhaisod he bore the heavy burden of responsibility which that position entailed, and it was only last year that he was relieved of this duty, when Mr. H. Diamond accepted the post.

Through the influence of the Zionist District the congregation annually sends to Palestine $3,000. This is only one instance of the many valuable services they are rendering to the cause of Zionism.

The present officers of the district are J. Lightstone, president; H. Diamond, vice-president; H. Kamenetsky, secretary, and H. L. Eber, treasurer.

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The Cemetery Committee

(Chevrah Kadisho)

To procure people to perform the last rites for the dead was always a problem facing Pottsville Jewry. The death of Rabbi Rosenson, on December 4, 1921, served to forcibly impress upon the congregation of Oheb Zedeck the importance of this matter, and it was decided to take immediate steps to correct the deficiency. Under the leadership of J. Lightstone, a Cemetery Committee was organized, with a membership of eighteen and with J. Lightstone as the president. Mr. Lightstone has been president ever since, and most of the credit for the wonderful service which has been rendered by this committee should revert to him.

During the five years of its existence the committee donated more than $1,000 to the Synagogue, provided funds for the burial of the poor among them, aided the families of the poor dead, and now, to climax their splendid performance of five years, they are erecting a house on the cemetery at a cost of over $2,000.

A source of pride to the congregation is the splendid arrangement and perpetual good condition of the cemetery. And all credit for these things is due to the committee and its officers. The officers are: J. Lightstone, chairman; M. Diamond, vice-chairman; H. L. Eber, treasurer, and H. Kamenetsky, secretary.

M. H. Spicker
President, Y. M. H. A.

The Y. M. H. A.

It is impossible to mention Jewish activities in this community without listing the Y. M. H. A. as one of their finest achievements. It has been a credit to the town and has produced some of the finest orators and athletes in the state.

The Y. M. H. A. was organized in 1897 with B. S. Pollack as president and M. Spicker as vice-president. It was due to the efforts of this organization that the Sunday School was organized at this time. But the original organization did not remain long in existence, due to various difficulties which beset the path of its progress. Not the least of these was the fact that it was impossible for them to find suitable quarters for their activities, and it was this factor that led to the disbandment of the organization about 1903.

There was no further movement in this direction until the year 1923. On August 16 of that year a successful reorganization was accomplished. The organization committee, composed of Michael Hanin, Leib Rudnik, Jack Chinitz, Bertram Kirschbaum and Dr. H. O. Hoffman, immediately promoted a drive for members. The object of the Y. M. H. A. was declared to be the promotion of activities among the younger Jewish element in Pottsville. Their first meeting was held in the Community Center, on Arch Street, with M. Hanin in the chair. Election was held, with M. Hanin, Dr. H. O. Hoffman and J. Chinitz placed temporarily in the offices of chairman, recording secretary and treasurer, respectively. Four teams of four men each were appointed to boost membership, these teams being formed from the ranks of the eighteen charter members of the new Y. M. H. A. There was also a committee named to draw up a constitution, which was subsequently adopted.

At each meeting the membership grew, and it was not long before the attention of the State Field Secretary was called to the Pottsville Y. M. H. A., with the result that he offered his co-operation, which was accepted. Invitations were sent to all the members of the old organization to join the new, many of which were accepted. One of the first addresses delivered to the members was that given by M. Spicker, who had been president of the original Y. M. H. A. Immediate search was commenced for suitable rooms for meeting, and the first social activity was a resumption of the practice of running the Purim Ball, which was held that year on February 24, preceded by a Thanksgiving Ball, which has become an annual custom.

In December of that year a visit was paid the organization by M. J. Ableson, the field secretary, who gave an address on the meaning of the Y. M. H. A. It was decided to found the new organization on the same

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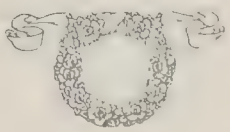

POTTSVILLE AND PORT CARBON

charter which had been used by the original Y. M. H. A. Permanent officers were elected for the year 1924, as follows M. H. Spicker, president; M. Hanin, vice-president; A. Eishler, financial secretary; Dr. H. O. Hoffman, recording secretary, and A. Breit, treasuer.

The congregation of Ohcb Zedeck having offered the Community Center as a place of meeting, it was decided to accept the offer until permanent quarters could be procured. Meetings were held in this place twice per month, with the building open to their activities every night except Friday, until October, when they moved into their present headquarters in the Gellert Building. During the intervening time they had been active in many directions. Members were dispatched to various towns to participate in extemporaneous speaking contests, debates, etc., and many loving cups, some medals and other trophies were brought back by these members, one of whom, J. Frumkin, participated in the state oratorical contest in Philadelphia, in which he won a prize. Reverend A. Chaseman was made an honorary member, as was also Reverend Erschler. Show nights were held with great success, and the local organization participated in stunt nights in nearby cities. An orchestra was organized, followed by the formation of a baseball team. The ball team played in many nearby towns, the first game being held in Wilkes-Barre, with the Y. M. H. A. team of that place as opponents. Arrangements were made to have games and magazines installed in the rooms shortly before they moved into their quarters in the Gellert Building.

On the 16th of December, 1924, the Jewish women joined their brethren by organizing the Y. W. H. A. It was composed of twenty-five charter members, with Mrs. H. Weiner as temporary chairlady.

During the year 1924 many notable speakers lectured to the members, among them Senator Charles A. Snyder, C. Palmer; Father Dougherty, of Ringtown; S. Mirkin and Dr. L. G. Rogers. At these lectures music was always a feature, which was furnished by Jewish boys and girls, members of the orchestra or otherwise competent home talent. In this manner all the Jewish holidays were celebrated, along with the religious exercises, as were also many of the national and legal holidays, such as Armistice Day, Mother's day, Children's Day, etc. Notable among the speakers who frequently addressed the Y. M. H. A. members was Rabbi Beck, then of Sunbury, who spoke many times during 1924 and 1925.

In 1926 election of officers was held, with but two changes made in the original staff. J. Frumkin was elected financial secretary, and H. Diamond, treasurer, while M. Spicker retained the presidency, M. Hanin the vice-presidency, and Dr. Hoffman continued as recording secretary. These are the present officers.

During 1926 presentation of a Jewish Encyclopedia was made to the local Public Library; the members contributed to the Lehighton Temple building fund, and arrangements were made for quarterly donations to the Jewish

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Welfare Board. It was in this year that Mr. Frumkin won a prize in the state oratorical contest in Philadelphia, also winning a medal in the district contest in Mahanoy City. Various Rabbis from different parts of the state delivered addresses from time to time. The musicales and debates attained such popularity that many persons secured season tickets for these affairs, which were conducted in series.

It was in this year that Rabbi Beck came to Pottsville to take charge of Oheb Zedeck Congregation, and he was immediately made an honorary member of the Y. M. H. A. Since that time he has been active in all their functions. Three delegates were sent to the Y. M. H. A. convention in Philadelphia last year, and Mr. Frumkin represented the organization in the inter-city oratorical contest. A Boy Scout troop was formed, with Rabbi Beck as Scout Master.

The Y. M. H. A. is intensely active, and its rooms are well patronized by the younger men. They are appointed in a modern manner with billiard tables, rest room, reading room and musical instruments. That it is a success is evidenced by the fact that its membership now runs over one hundred.

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The Ladies' Benevolent Society

Another charitable organization composed of ladies came into being with the formation in 1911 of the Ladies' Benevolent Society. This society was founded two years later than the Ladies' Auxiliary, as it was then known. Those responsible for the formation of this new organization were Mrs. H. L. Eber and Mrs. Ida Fromm. There were twelve charter members, as follows: Mrs. H. L. Eber, Mrs. Ida Fromm, Mrs. E. Goodon, Mrs. E. Deull, Mrs. J. Weiner, Mrs. L. Cohn, Mrs. Sam Myers, Mrs. H. Kamenetsky, Mrs. Houser, Mrs. Rachman, Mrs. Shore and Mrs. Fine. Thus, for the second time in the history of Pottsville Jewry, did the women band together for the avowed purpose of performing acts of charity and functioning socially by way of entertainments, bazaars, etc. The original officers of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, as elected at the first meeting, were Mrs. H. L. Eber, president; Mrs. E. Deull, vice-president; Mrs. A. Fine, treasurer, and Miss B. Fine, secretary. Monthly meetings were arranged to be held in the Synagogue.

In 1912-13, when the new Synagogue was under construction, the Ladies' Benevolent Society undertook to erect the Ark and furnish the Parachos for same, as also the mantles for the Torahs, the Minera and Chanika Lamp. This voluntary offer to aid in the completion of the new Temple was indeed a courageous gesture on the part of these women, as at that time their treasury contained but forty dollars, their funds having been depleted by contributions to many worthy charities, both organized and individual. Aside from their continual contributions to the poor and needy of Pottsville and their caring for the sick, they maintained a Noe Asochim, or Home for the Poor. Nevertheless, through the valiant efforts of Mrs. H. L. Eber and Mrs. A. Fine, they made good their offer, and after much hard work raised funds sufficient for the accomplishment of that which they had undertaken to do, which amount was nearly $1,500.

Scarcely a meeting passed but what there was some expenditure for a worthy purpose. They gave to Jewish relief funds; they donated sums toward the support of the babies of poor families, bought coal and food and paid the rent of those unable to meet these necessary expenditures of life. Unfortunate victims of the White Plague rejoiced more than once upon receiving from these missionaries of mercy a check for no mean amount; funds were donated to the Zionist movement and B'nai B'rith; stricken persons were helped to enter institutions, and their transportation donated. And all the while their membership grew.

From 1919 to 1924 the officers were Mrs. H. L. Eber, president; Mrs. Joe Harrison, vice-president; Mrs. N. Rouse, secretary, and Mrs. A. Fine, treasurer.

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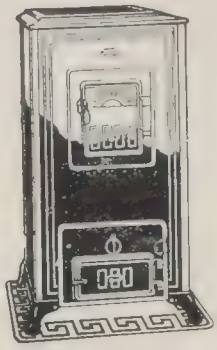

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In 1921 they bought and presented to the Synagogue the Talmud. Among their annual contributions they recognized the following institutions: Hebrew Sheltering Aid and Immigration, National Jewish Hospital, Keron Heysod, B'nai B'rith Orphanage and the Pottsville Children's Home. Mrs. H. L. Eber resigned the presidency in 1922 and was succeeded by Mrs. L. M. Eber. In 1922 it was agreed to donate five dollars monthly to the Oheb Zedeck congregation. Fifty dollars was donated to the congregation in April, 1923, besides the regular monthly sum. This was for the Community Center. There was another change among the officers in 1924, when Mrs. Levine succeeded Mrs. Joe Harrison to the vice-presidency.

Thus, from the year of its formation, 1911, to the present time, the Ladies' Benevolent Society has gone its way, alleviating physical, mental and financial distress, remembering and respecting the sick with flowers and the dead with tombstones and growing in membership and in the esteem of the community. With an initial membership of twelve they commenced their good work fifteen years ago, and with a membership to-day of seventy-five they are continuing that work. And that they have wasted no time in idle squabbling among themselves is shown by the fact that there has been very little change in the official personnel of those fifteen years, the chairs being filled at the present time by these ladies: Mrs. L. M. Eber, president; Mrs. J. Levine, vice-president; Mrs. N. Rouse, secretary, and Mrs. A. Fine, treasurer.

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Again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

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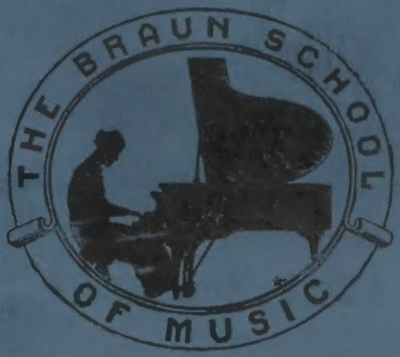

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